

UKs largest solar roof installation goes live in race against time

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The UK's largest solar roof installation has gone live in a race against time to beat a Government deadline next week to withdraw Feed-in Tariff funding for utility-sized schemes.

The successful switch-on was enabled following a pioneering partnership between Lightsource Renewable Energy and Octopus Investments and the £4 million project cost was funded by hundreds of small investors throughout the country.

The 7,000 solar panels at the Promens' site in Beccles, Suffolk, has a capacity of 1.65MW, making it the largest roof-top project in the UK to date and covers the same area as two-and-a-half football pitches.

The Government has dramatically reduced the subsidies available for any solar scheme over 50KW coming online after the 1st August, so it is likely that this will be the UK's largest roof-top installation ever.

The on-site link between the energy source and consumption removes the need for new substations or land-based grid connections because close to 100% of the power generated will be used on site. The site is a perfect demonstration of embedded generation because the power production is matched to the on-site load.

Lightsource is one of the few developers to have successfully met the August 1st deadline, ensuring its installations are eligible to receive the Government's current Feed in Tariff for larger (+50Kw) sites. It has been a race against time for the construction companies involved, with some having only five weeks on site to complete their work.

Paul Latham, managing director of Octopus said: "The Promens installation isn't just a great achievement in its own right, but also a validation that Octopus can deliver to its investors what we said we would. Given the tight deadline set by the Government, we were one of very few investment houses able to provide funding for solar projects such as this one.

"However, none of it could have been done without the support from our investors, who recognised that solar offers a unique opportunity to benefit from Government-approved incentives by investing as little as £3,000.

The successful delivery of projects such as this one will only strengthen the demand for solar installations in the UK."

Nicholas Boyle, CEO of Lightsource said: "This roof-top solar plant highlights the important role solar generation has to play in our future energy mix, particularly when the energy it produces is used at source removing the need for wasteful distribution networks.

"Getting this site online before the August deadline was a considerable achievement and it is a real credit to Grupotec, for their speed and coordination during design and construction, and to Promens as a company for their commitment to the project and a willingness to do what was needed to get it completed."

Promens site boasts largest solar panel roof in UK

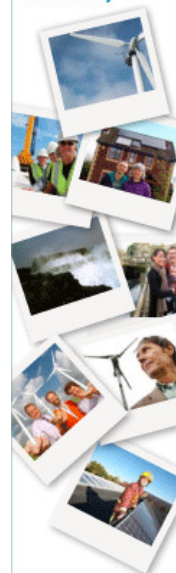


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